

Between The Lines

May 2024
Episode 145

Remember and Honor



Memorial Day
May 27, 2024

ATTENTION IMPORTANT INFORMATION

NOTICE:
Everyone must use the
front entrance to the Chili
Recreation Center. The
Exit Doors in the meeting
rooms are now alarmed.
No Exceptions!

Per Chili Recreation Dept.

*For Chapter 20
members/guests with
mobility issues:*

*There are walkers and
electric scooters available
at the main entrance to
Chili Recreation Center*

**MEMBERSHIP and BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETINGS are now at**

TOWN OF CHILI COMMUNITY CENTER

3237 Chili Avenue
Rochester, NY 14624

Room 218 (Banquet Room)
6:30pm – 8:45pm monthly

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At our annual dinner, we presented awards for the first time in several years. The Community Service Award was presented to Ron Travato, the Veteran Service Award was presented to Ray Melens and Tony DeBellis, and the Roger Robach Award was presented to Laura Heltz of the Veterans Outreach Center. All the awards were richly deserved and I would like to congratulate each of the recipients and thank them for all their time and service to the veteran community.

Don't forget the cleanup at the Memorial on **May 4th beginning at 8:00 AM!** Many hands are needed to get the Memorial ready for the Lilac Festival and the upcoming summer season.

On **May 18th** we observe **Armed Forces Day** when we recognize those currently serving our country.

May 19th is the Annual Memorial Service at the War Memorial (Blue Cross Arena). At this service we remember those veterans who have died during the past year.

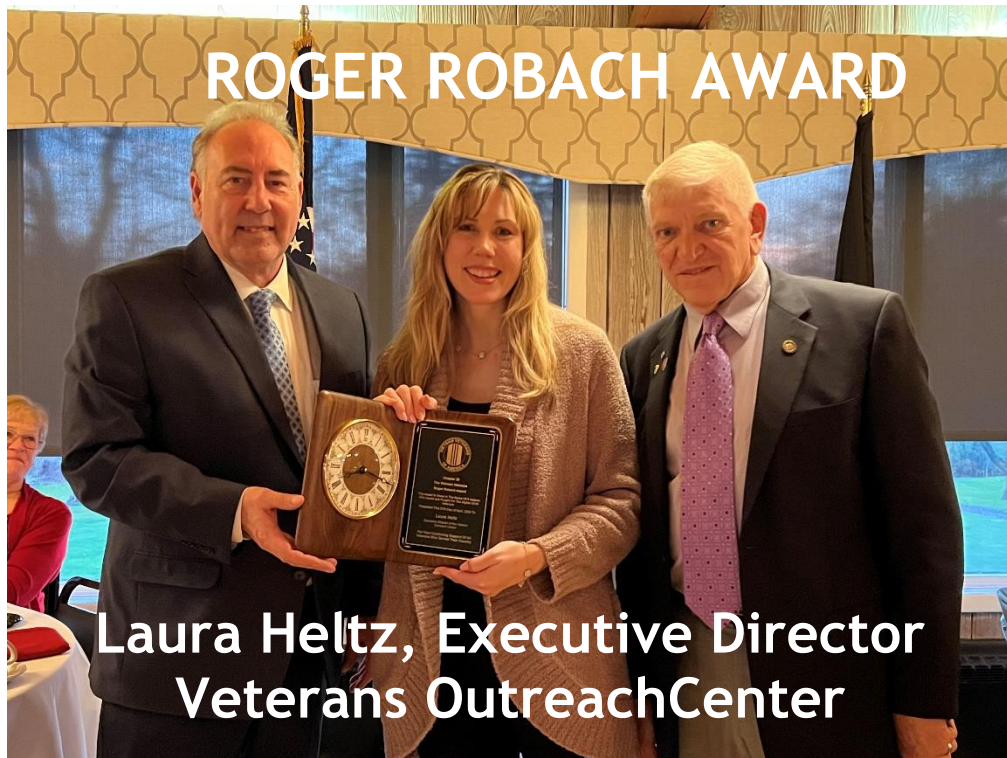
On **May 27th**, we observe **Memorial Day** and remember all those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country. At 1:00 PM we will hold our annual service at Highland Park. Please take the time to attend the service as we remember those who died in the Vietnam War and the War on Terror.

Twenty-two Chapter members received a 50-year pin and a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition from Congressman Morelle recently. I would like to do another ceremony soon. As of now I have just one name. If you would like to participate in a pinning ceremony, please let me know.

Hope to see you at our May 9th meeting - it starts at 6:30 PM.

Charles Klauck
President

ANNUAL DINNER AWARDS PRESENTATION





Veteran Service Award - Tony DeBellis



Veteran Service Award - Ray Melens

PINNING CEREMONY



Rep. Morelle's office was kind enough to share a link with us to a photo album, so you can view the individual photos:

[PINNING CEREMONY](#)



Remembering Our Fallen Heroes Born In May

Website - <http://rochestervietnammemorial.org/>



- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| Neidermeier, Thomas David | 5-1-1947 |
| Petramalo, Thomas | 5-6-1936 |
| Quinn, Ronald Gene | 5-6-1943 |
| McCarthy Jr., Carl R. | 5-6-1950 |
| Pringle, James Edward | 5-8-1949 |
| Parker Jr., George Joseph | 5-10-1941 |
| Daniels, Rex Martin | 5-10-1950 |
| Beltran, Frank Joseph | 5-11-1948 |
| Kleinhans, Lawrence C. | 5-14-1947 |
| Ludwig, Larry George | 5-15-1947 |
| Roczen, Alexander Anthony | 5-16-1947 |
| Henderson, Robert Caufeld | 5-17-1947 |
| Schumacher, Jeffrey David | 5-17-1950 |
| Cartwright, Thomas Clark | 5-18-1943 |
| Reed, David N. | 5-28-1951 |
| Redding, Walter Lee | 5-30-1949 |

Friends of the Memorial
To be placed on the volunteer contact list, contact Chuck Macaluso at 585-225-8288 or Chuckmac66@yahoo.com

Memorial Tours & Presentations
Persons interested in on-site tours or presentations at schools or organizations, contact Chuck Macaluso at 585-225-8288 or Chuckmac66@yahoo.com



Election Results

by Dan Corona, Chair

*The Annual Meeting & Elections were held
on April 11 2024*

The results are in!

Directors:

Dale Webster

Tom Puff

Bob Caulkins

State Council Reps:

Charles Klauck

Nick DeLeo

Rosemary Rossi-Williams

Ken Allocco

Larry Strassner

Dale Webster

Election Committee:

Dan Corona

Bill Auble

Sam Otto

Dale Webster

Angelo Ciresi

POW/MIA

CHAIRMAN JOE PECK



There are currently no new reports from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), the National League of Families and the DOD of any new Vietnam service member being recovered, returned and identified this month. The total number of Americans who are still missing from the Vietnam War stands at 1577.

There are reports of the recoveries and identifications of individuals from the following wars:

- Cpl. Frank V. Benak, US Army was lost Dec. 5 1942 Buna, Papua, New Guinea. He was accounted for on Feb. 2, 2024
- Pfc. Alcario V. Flores, US Army was lost Jan. 18, 1945 near Reipertswiller, France. He was accounted for on Mar. 1, 2024.
- Pvt. Kwack K. Woo, US Army was lost Feb. 7, 1945 near Biesdorf, Germany. He was accounted for on Mar. 13, 2024.
- Pvt. Donald L. Shutts, US Army was lost Feb. 19, 1944 near Ponte Rotto and Cisterna, Italy. He was accounted for on Mar. 14, 2024.
- SSgt. Edward K. Pyle, US Army Air Corps was lost Dec. 1, 1943 at Yodayadet, Burma. He was accounted for on Mar. 14, 2024.
- Pvt. James C. Loyd, US Army was lost possibly at sea (Italy) on Apr. 19, 1945. He was accounted for on Mar. 19, 2024.
- Pvt. Orville J. Cox, US Army Air Corps was lost at Agloloma Bay, Bataan. He was accounted for on Mar. 20, 2024
- Tech Sgt. Harold D. Pitts, US Army was lost Feb. 7, 1945 near Biesdorf, Germany. He was accounted for on Mar. 20, 2024

- Coxswain Harley E. Alexander, US Navy Reserve was lost at sea in the English Channel on June 8, 1944. He was accounted for on Mar. 22, 2024.
- Pvt. Jacob Gutterman, US Army Air Corps was captured at the surrender of Bataan on April 9, 1942 in the Philippines. He was reported to have died of Malaria at Cabanatuan POW camp in the Philippines on July 16, 1942. He was accounted for on Mar. 26, 2024.
- Cpl. Robert P. Raess, US Army was lost Sept. 1, 1950 near Chang Yong, South Korea. He was accounted for on Mar. 26, 2024.

UNTIL ALL OUR MISSING SERVICE MEN AND WOMAN HAVE BEEN ACCOUNTED FOR, WE WILL NEVER GIVE UP HOPE THAT SOMEDAY THEY WILL BE RETURNED TO THEIR FAMILIES AND A GREATFUL NATION.

“WELCOME HOME BROTHERS AND REST IN PEACE”



MARCHING UNIT/HONOR GUARD

Charles Klauck - Commander

MARCHING UNIT

Here is the current listing of parades:

- May 11, 2024 - Lilac Parade
- May 26, 2024 - Irondequoit Memorial Day Parade
- May 27, 2024 - Rochester (downtown) Memorial Day Parade
- June 22, 2024 - Ridge-Culver Firemen's Parade (Pending)
- July 4, 2024 - Irondequoit Fourth of July Parade
- July 11, 2024 - Webster Firemen's Parade

Additional dates remain pending.

Memorial Day Service (5/27/2024)

All members of the **Marching Unit** and **Honor Guard** are asked to be at Highland Park for our Memorial Day Service at 1:00 PM.

Please arrive by 12:30 so we can get set up in the various positions for the service. Those in uniform, please wear Marching Unit uniform with the **GREEN** belt.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

by Charles Klauck, Chairman, Membership Affairs

Chapter 20 membership is currently at 617 members and AVVA membership is at 36 members as of 04/26/24.

Please welcome **Erskine Lattimore** transferring to Chapter 20 from member at large.

There are many eligible veterans or past members out there waiting to be asked to join or rejoin. Membership is the backbone of any organization. The pool of eligible veterans out there is shrinking but we can still bring in new members to the Chapter. Please extend an invitation to anyone you know who is eligible and not currently a member.

Chapter 20 membership is open to U.S. Veterans who served on active duty (other than for training purposes) in the Republic of Vietnam between November 1, 1955, and May 07, 1975, or any duty location between August 05, 1964 and May 07, 1975. Please note the new dates for in country veterans.

Membership includes a subscription to our award-winning newsletter, *Between the Lines*, and *The VVA Veteran*, bringing you updates on issues and legislation affecting veterans, as well as unique articles on the people, places, and history of the Vietnam experience.

Membership in the Associate of Vietnam Veterans of America (AVVA) is open to anyone; you do not need to be a veteran. Membership in the AVVA has been static for some time. If you know of someone who might be interested, invite them to join.

We need new members! Membership applications are available on our Website, in this newsletter, or by contacting me, Charles Klauck by email at chask809@outlook.com. Completed applications should be sent to Charles Klauck, 809 Tinker Tavern Rd, Webster, NY 14580. To facilitate the processing of the application, please include a copy of your DD-214 and a check for \$50.00 payable to VVA Chapter 20.

**Vietnam Veteran and
War on Terror Memorials**
Spring Cleanup 2024

Saturday, May 4, 2024

Start Time – 8:00 AM

Bring - Yard Tools

Knee Pads, Kneelers

Rakes, safety glasses, gloves, bucket/rags,

**Weed scrapers – OLD screwdrivers, putty
knives, etc.**

(Optional) Your Favorite

**String trimmer, Wheelbarrow, or other
equipment**

WANT
We ~~hope~~ to see you there!

*On Memorial Day, we honor all those who have served
and given their lives for this great Nation.
At this time we will also honor those who served and have passed
from our ranks here at Chapter 20.
"They are our brothers forever"*

LIST OF DECEASED CHAPTER 20 MEMBERS

Bob Behnke*
Martin Driffill
Dennis D. Rinkus
Patrick C. Parker
Joseph P. Terzo Jr.
Wayne P. Soule
John M. Harrigan
Donald B. Maclean
Lynn A. Citron*
Michael E. Young
Jeffrey P. Lundberg
Wayne Morris
Jeffrey C. Hammond
Thomas L. Steinberg
William J. DeHollender
Larry P. Davenport
Frank Stephens
David T. Hilkert
Don Murrell
Jim Cass
Eugene O. Ball
Clyde Saxon *
Bradley C. Roth
Ronald F. Popowich
Peter G. Lambert
Robert Rudolph
william maxion
Elton L. Bailey
David B. DeLola
Charles G. Holtz
Howard Lewczyk *
Ervin J. LewisSteve Hess *

Peter J. Bendig
John P. Henderson
John Claypoole
Eric W. Bradshaw
Richard L. Butchino
Charles H. Carey
Paul Plaisted
Wayne C. Hanson
Timothy M. Heffer *
Ronald J. Mummert
David L. Wooding
Gary J. Nacca
Gerald R. Dusel
Jerry Popen
Edward F. McLaughlin Jr.
Gerald J. Pruonto
David E. Johns
Richard Beeley
James A. Huff
Roger W. Gaede
Michael P. Couture
Michael T. Donlon
Keith M. Reitz
Douglas M. McWilliams
Dominic Bianchi
Edward M. Hickey
Don W. Webber
Dale R. Aiello
Gerald R. Mart
Gregory D. Carter
John Arthur
George Stevens

Ted Ives
Richard E. Cummings
Ronald F. LaBeau
Garren Sparks
Charles E. Rupert
Richard Brown
William T. Sprentall
James A. Lester
Raymond R. Lincourt *
William G. Cahill
Robert L. Hill
William D. Peterson
Gabe Dalmath
John Lennox
Raymond Ware
Fred Ostrom
David C. Byrns
Jack Battaglia
Robbert S. Stevenson *
Gerard R. Ives
John C. Magee
Gerald F. Sullivan
Wally Gekoski
Lafayette L. Green
Jerald T. Denny
Lewis E. Weitzel
Gerald C. Fuchs
James B. Gilmore
Gerhard McBride
Melvin J. Cass
Daniel P. Englert
William M. Anthony
Gerald F. Heath
Carlton C. Covey
Pat Marianetti
David R. Mulay
Gregory J. Smith
Mark Keogh
Michael Cooper
Raymond P. Campbell

Gary E. Hailston
Howard D. Silvers
John L. Doles
Frankie D. Lawhorn
Lynn A. Lansberry
William (Bud) Hemmerick
Emmett E. Porter
Robert M. Hale
Richard P. Chenaille
George W. Malone
Solomon A. Sherman
Alexander F. Soos
Martin L. Keymel
John P. McCabe *
Kenneth Westveer
J. Max Lill Jr.
David F. Nice
David A. Kogler
Roger Lee Smith
Stephen J. Lingl
Elwood R. Hart
John Guarre
Robert W. Livingstone
Ronald L. Mullins
Ernest J. Hegadorn
William F. Jarosinski
John M. Lavell
Allen J. Weingartner
James Maartense
Donald H. Deverell
Phil F. Brightman
James E. Carter
Mark J. Tamkus
John M. Hrankowski
Ralph A. Handley
Clarence A. Jovanelly
Francis P. Burns
Jeremiah L. Peck
Robert A. Cenzi
David E. Hooker

Thomas E. Ragland *
James S. Jenkins
Albert S. Marciano Jr.
Carl R. Voght
Richard C. Lamagra
Robert L. Novgrod
Howard L. Davies
Jeffrey P. Marks
Wayne N. Sparks
Dean D. Friscano
Barry D. Halcus
Gary L. Schojan
James A. Sweeney
Ronald A. Michalski
Robert Anderson
Richard L. Holton
John Goodwin
David G. Eng
William P. Cook
Charles M. Helberg
Norbert (Zeke) D. Evans
Joseph J. Albano Jr.
Paul A. Dailey
William (Bill) Follett
Kenneth J. DeLorme
David F. Wido
Jim McDermott
Patrick M. Jimenez
Thomas D. Tette
Yale Seils
Donald C. Lippens
Paul S. Halpern
Robert D. Harris
Phillip P. Nicasto
Keith A. Turner
Bill Meminger
Gary Lee Ames
Alan Clark Kelly
Dave Stamp
John N. Thompson

Gene E. Brown
Gerald A. Irland
Bill Ludwig
Richard Shepard
Charles P. Elberti
James E. Hall
Keith M. Moll
Gene A. Thomas
Ed Jones
Norman Wynes
David E. Wood
Michael J. Carroll
Terry M. Bergeron
Adrian F. Fortuna
Frank H. Peace *
George E. Drew
Richard J. Proper
John Dusingberre
Charles Furgeson
Richard Carey
Louis Colangelo
Allan L. Parks
Howard Wilson
Thomas Rice
Chuck Stanton
Gerald Luzum
Craig I. Bott
Richard L. King
Robert V. Abrams
Dennis F. Gauger
Steve Pratt
Brian Wirpsa
Thomas K. Kearns
Peter Galle
Daniel R. Murray
James Weissinger
John A. Graham
William M. Ribble
George Polosky
Lee Houser

Frederick A. Leipold III
Charles (Chuck) Sawyer
Henry E. Meschi
Andrew Allocco
Michael E. Geisler
Jim Hanley
Thurston Chisholm
Jacob W. Dewolf
James Jay Garlock
Gregory K. Dunlap
David Hendrix
Richard Maas
Kenneth C. Wise
John Baart
Stephen L. Burritt
Ernest Mori
Michael Dinsmore
Ronald L. Bryant
Jack C. Walters
Thomas J. Cray *
Joel E. Durham
Robert E. Dezen
Brian D. Cole
Tom Gleason
Gary J. Colombo
William D. Cappoli Jr.
Stirling Harris *
Augustine V. Dentino
Larry E. Garno
Richard Luken Jr.
Juil R. Robinson Jr. *
Keith W. Lape
Robert J. Mellody
Richard J. Dixon
Daniel P. Waters
Richard Korbelt
James R Hasenohr
John C. Grentzinger Sr.
Gregory Hall
Bernard Fry

Ken L. Moore
Andrew Restivo
Frank Rossi
Richard H. Parks
Thomas C. Emens
Charlie Rabidoux
Kim E. Shoebridge
Kenneth Hall
Thomas R. Holmes
William A. Gebhardt *
Jerry Allen Conley
Tom Kohl
David Freunds Schuh
John (Jack) Favret
Robert Kuzimicki
Ray Skinner
William J. Krieg
Ronald A. Delcour
Russell F. Terhaar
Thomas R. Shanahan
Dick D'Imperio
Walter H. Monahan
John T. Schwalm
John L. Webster *
John V. Farley
Joseph R. Caccamise
George F. Demott Jr.
Thomas F. Cenzi
John V. Farley
Robert J. Giles
Richard Burkhart
Louis C. Jezsik
Donald A. Young
Alphonse T. Oliveri
Joseph Swystun
Dain L. Davidow
Mike P. Murphy
Norris DeFisher
Andy Place
Roger Burkhart

Russel Chimera
Ronald C. Huber
Ronald Di Natale
George Sanford
Bill Heinrich
Robert H. Quinn Jr.
Steven K. Frisbee
William J. Munnings
Gerald E. Cox
Roger Wiesmore
Irving Matties
Robert A. Barone
Peter J. Zahn
John Colburn
Michael J. Schwartz
Grant M. Wideman
Christopher Bubins
Bill D. Burke
Gordy Williams
Gary Beikirch *
William Loverde
Randall Howie
James G. Vilar
James Palermo
George Schneider
Stephen R. Whittaker
Alan M. Stiehler
Richard W. Brown
Kenneth C. Brooks
Thomas C. Callahan
Louis E. Amarosa
Craig K. Wirth
Roger Bailey
Richard W. Skellen

Richard J. Switzer
Barry R. Culhane
Edwin Seils
William C. Clark
Thomas A. Monk *
John DiJames
Mark J. Donahue
Lawrence J. Mastrella
Daniel Nussbaum
Don W. Nealon
Robert C. LaBlanc
Wayne R. Marriott
Mark H. Britton
David H. Kirkpatrick
James C. Moore
John A. Sherman
Gary Lockameir
Allen R. Schichtel
Joe Harkness
Ronald T. Poness
Bob Orvis
Edwin F. Williams
Earl F. Bonenblust
Richard T. Defiore
Frank E. Lazzario
Thomas W. Curry
James L. Love
Robert J. White
Daniel T. Paprocki
George A. Dadson Jr.
James B. Coates
Howard Jones Jr.

BENEFITS

CONTRIBUTED BY S. Patykiewicz

Dear Veteran,

The **Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 2 Clinical Contact Center** is a virtual service available to all Veterans enrolled for care at any of the VA Medical Centers (VAMC) or VA Clinics across New York, New Jersey, and two counties in Pennsylvania. You can reach our dedicated team to get medical care **24/7/365** for urgent health care needs and questions simply by calling our toll-free number **1-800-877-6976** or by calling your local facility and pressing option 3.

From home, on the road, or anywhere in the United States, during the day or at night, call our toll-free number **1-800-877-6976** and our Registered Nurses will determine how to best meet your needs. Our Virtual Urgent Care Nurse Practitioners, Virtual Emergency Physicians, or Virtual Clinical Pharmacy Providers are available to meet with you by video or telephone appointment during the week as well as evenings, weekends, and holidays.

Our medical Providers assess your needs by telephone or video visit and recommend a treatment plan, all from wherever you are in the United States. If needed, the medical Provider can also prescribe you with urgent medications from VA or non-VA community pharmacies in your location. All your treatment is documented in your VA electronic medical record for your Primary Care team to be aware when you follow up with them. You are at the center of everything we do in the **VISN 2 Clinical Contact Center**. Before considering going to a local non-VA urgent care or emergency room for non-life-threatening health concerns, we encourage you to give virtual care a try from the comfort of your home, work, or even during your travels. Please save our toll-free VISN 2 Clinical Contact Center number **1-800-877-6976** in your mobile phone for easy access so you have it when you need it or contact us by dialing your local facility and pressing option 3. In addition to receiving the high-quality care from your home, there is also no cost to you for utilizing **VISN 2 Clinical Contact Center**.

The VISN 2 Clinical Contact Center team is here for you to receive the Right Care, Right Now wherever you are!

Thank you,

VISN 2 Clinical Contact Center

[VA increases access to health care for thousands of Veterans through nationwide access sprints](#)

03/26/2024 2:00 PM EDT

VA's initiative has expanded access to care across the nation by offering night clinics, weekend clinics, increasing the number of Veterans scheduled into daily clinic schedules, and more

WASHINGTON —Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that it has made it easier and faster for Veterans to access VA health care nationwide through VA's Access Sprints — an initiative to

expand access to care by offering night and weekend clinics, increasing the number of Veterans scheduled into daily clinic schedules, and more.

As a result of these sprints, VA saw approximately 25,000 more new patients from October 2023 to February 2024 compared to the same period last year – and new patient appointments increased by 11%. Additionally:

- 81% of VA Medical Centers saw more new patients than the same period last year
- 12% fewer new patients are waiting more than 20 or 28 days for an appointment
- 14% fewer new patients are waiting for appointments with a community provider due to wait time eligibility

Expanding access to VA care is a top priority for VA and the entire Biden-Harris Administration because VA has proven to be the best care in America for Veterans. Veterans who receive VA health care have better health outcomes than non-enrolled Veterans, and VA hospitals have dramatically outperformed non-VA hospitals in [overall quality ratings](#) and [patient satisfaction ratings](#). Additionally, VA health care is often [more affordable](#) than non-VA health care for Veterans.

“Our mission is to provide world-class health care to our Nation’s heroes. When a Veteran comes to VA, we must be able to give them the care they deserve, whenever and wherever they need it,” said **VA Under Secretary for Health Shereef Elnahal, M.D.** “I am so proud of our workforce for finding new ways to open VA’s doors wider — and I’m excited to use what we learned from the Access Sprints to make sure that Veterans have access to VA care at every turn.”

VA is currently delivering more care and more benefits to more Veterans than ever before in our nation’s history, setting [an all-time record for health care appointments provided in 2023](#).

VA is undertaking this effort at a time when we are also [expanding health care eligibility](#) for millions of Veterans nationwide under the PACT Act. As of March 5, all Veterans who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving in the military and meet certain requirements became eligible to enroll directly in VA health care. This means that all Veterans who served in the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, the Global War on Terror, or any other combat zone after 9/11 will be eligible to enroll directly in VA health care without first applying for VA benefits. Additionally, Veterans who never deployed but were exposed to toxins or hazards while training or on active duty in the United States will also be eligible to enroll.

This increase in access is part of a nationwide VA Access Sprint to benefit all Veterans who are eligible for VA care. Local VA facilities and regional networks spent several months designing and implementing locally driven innovations and tried-and-true practices. As part of VA’s ongoing strategy of multiple, large-scale initiatives aimed at the goal of providing the soonest and best care to Veterans, their focus was to improve timeliness, efficiency, capacity, and employee experience.

This expansion of care is made possible, in part, by last year’s record hiring in VA’s Veterans Health Administration. Last year, VA exceeded its hiring goals in the Veterans Health Administration – growing at the fastest rate in 15 years and bringing in more than 61,000 new hires – to prepare for an increase in VA health care enrollment among Veterans under the PACT Act. In total, VHA now has more employees than ever before in VA history, and VA’s retention efforts also led to a 20% decrease in turnover rate among VHA employees from 2022 to 2023.

[VA sets all-time record for benefits delivered to women Veterans](#)

03/21/2024 05:00 AM EDT

WASHINGTON —Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that it is delivering disability compensation benefits to a record number of women Veterans. Right now, 702,557 women Veterans are receiving [disability compensation benefits](#) from VA — an all-time record and an increase of 180,959 women Veterans (or 26%) over five years ago.

The average woman Veteran who receives disability compensation benefits from VA has a 68% combined disability rating, and they receive an average of \$26,809 in earned disability compensation benefits per year from VA. The average grant rate for women Veterans is 89.2%, meaning that 89% of women Veterans who have applied for disability benefits with VA have received benefits for at least one condition.

Women Veterans are the fastest growing cohort at VA, and — in addition to delivering record levels of disability compensation benefits — VA is now serving more women Veterans in its health care system than ever before. The sharp increase in women Veteran benefits in recent years is largely due to the PACT Act, which has empowered VA to expand health care and benefits to millions of Veterans who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving the country.

President Biden believes the nation has a sacred obligation to take care of Veterans, which is why he made supporting Veterans a key pillar in his Unity Agenda for the nation. Expanding access to benefits and services for women Veterans has been a key priority for VA and the entire Biden-Harris Administration. During his State of the Union address to the nation, President Biden reinforced his commitment to ensure all Veterans get the care and benefits they earned and deserve.

“Women Veterans have fought in every war since the American Revolution, but they have not always been able to access the care and benefits they’ve earned and deserved. But now, at VA, we’re making sure that those days are over,” **said Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Tanya Bradsher, the first woman Veteran deputy secretary of VA.** “These record numbers demonstrate that we’ve made tremendous progress in recent years, but they are still just the beginning — we won’t rest until every woman Veteran is coming to VA.”

“We want women Veterans to come to VA for their health care and benefits, which is why we’re hosting women Veteran outreach events across the country throughout this month and throughout this year,” **said VA Under Secretary for Benefits Josh Jacobs.** “To all the women Veterans out there, we encourage you to visit [VA.gov](#) or call 1-800-MYVA411 to apply for your earned benefits today. We will do everything in our power to serve you, just like you’ve served our country.”

In recognition of Women’s History Month, VA’s regional offices are hosting or participating in 139 outreach efforts specifically focused on women Veterans. In addition to disability compensation benefits, VA’s concerted efforts to reach out to women Veterans are helping them get education benefits and well-paying jobs: despite only making up 16.5 % of the Veteran population, women Veterans received 27.5% of [Post 9/11 education benefits](#) and 26.4% of [Veteran Readiness and Employment benefits](#) in 2023.

Over the past two years, VA has also dramatically expanded health care for women Veterans. Specifically, VA expanded [breast cancer screenings and mammograms](#) for Veterans with potential toxic exposures; [supported access to reproductive health services](#), including contraception, [in vitro fertilization](#), [abortion counseling and – in certain cases – abortion care](#) for Veterans and VA beneficiaries; and [dramatically expanded one-on-one maternity care coordination](#) for women Veterans. Women [Veterans are also enrolling in VA health care](#) at higher rates under the PACT Act, and VA recently hosted its [first Women Veterans Experience Action Center](#), helping more than 340 women Veterans apply for the care and benefits they deserve. Additionally, [as announced by the White House this week](#), VA and the Department of Defense are launching a new Women’s Health Research collaborative to explore opportunities to promote joint efforts to advance women’s health research and improve evidence-based care for Veterans and service members.

In every VA regional office, VA has Veteran Coordinators who function as the primary contact for women Veterans. These coordinators are able to provide specific information and comprehensive assistance to women Veterans, their dependents, and beneficiaries concerning VA benefits and related non-VA benefits. Each VA medical center nationwide also has a [Women Veterans Program Manager](#), who helps coordinate all the services women Veterans might need. Women Veterans can also call, text, or [chat online](#) with the Women Veterans Call Center at 855-829-6636 to get help and find available resources and services in their area.

To learn more about VA disability benefits, visit VA’s benefits [website](#). For more information on women’s health care at VA, visit <https://www.womenshealth.va.gov/>

[**VA has processed more than one million Veteran benefit claims in fiscal year 2024, the fastest rate in VA history**](#)

03/19/2024 1:30 PM EDT

WASHINGTON — Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that it has processed its one millionth Veteran [benefits](#) claim in fiscal year 2024. VA reached this milestone March 4 — the earliest in VA history and nearly six weeks faster than the previous all-time record (from fiscal year 2023). VA has completed almost 35% more claims than at this point last year.

As a part of President Biden’s Unity Agenda for the nation, VA is continuing to deliver more benefits, more quickly, to more Veterans than ever before. Through February of this fiscal year, VA provided \$69 billion in earned compensation and pension benefits to 6.5 million Veterans and survivors. This milestone builds on last year’s historic pace, when VA delivered [record amounts](#) of earned benefits to Veterans and survivors.

This increase in Veteran benefits is largely due to the PACT Act, which has empowered VA to expand health care and benefits to millions of Veterans who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving our country.

“We’re proud to be delivering more benefits, more quickly, to more Veterans and survivors than ever before – but we’re not slowing down,” said **VA Under Secretary for Benefits Josh Jacobs**. “We won’t

rest until every Veteran and every survivor to get the VA benefits and care that they've earned. So, to any Veteran or survivor out there: don't wait, [submit your claim today.](#)"

Whenever a Veteran files a claim, our goal is to work with them every step of the way to get to "yes." As a result of this approach, VA has been able to grant benefits for 60.4% of claims filed in 2024 — including 75.1% of PACT Act claims — a sharp increase in the grant rate from pre-PACT Act levels.

Veterans also continue to apply for benefits at record rates, with VA receiving 4.5% more claims thus far in fiscal year 2024 than at this point in 2023. Since the PACT Act was signed into law by President Biden, Veterans and their families have filed more than 3.5 million claims.

As a part of reaching one million claims, VA processed 221,592 disability compensation and pension claims during January 2024 alone – making it VA's highest single month of claims production ever, surpassing the previous monthly record of 193,411 from May 2023. VA's top 11 best claims production months in agency history all happened in the last 12 months. Additionally, the organization continues to achieve single day processing milestones – VA processed between 9,000 and 10,000 Veteran claims 43 times in fiscal year 2024 and more than 10,000 Veteran claims 35 times during the same time period. February 7, 2024 was the best single production day ever in VBA history with 10,997 claims completed. Before fiscal year 2024, VA had only had three 9,000 claim production days in history.

As a result of this record pace, Veteran claims pending over 125 days – known as the backlog – has decreased by more than 42,000 claims over the past three months. Due to [record numbers of claims applications](#), the backlog is still [expected to grow in 2024](#) before decreasing at the end of this year – and VA will continue to hire new claims processors, invest in continuous learning for all claims processors, and make technology improvements to ensure that Veterans, family members, caregivers and survivors receive the benefits they've earned and deserve as quickly and accurately as possible.

VA remains focused on hiring and training new claims processors and has grown the claims processing workforce more than 50% since fiscal year 2021. This growth, along with new technology to assist those processors, has allowed VA to meet the historic demand for benefits precipitated by the passage of the PACT Act in 2022.



Veterans Faced with Cancer Support Group



2nd and 4th Tuesday of the Month
5:30-7 pm
255 Alexander Street
Rochester, NY 14607

Cancer Support Community at Gilda's Club, provides free social and emotional support to adults, teens and children impacted by cancer at no cost.

The Veterans Cancer Support Group provides a forum for individuals to share their experiences living with or surviving cancer and connect through common fears, emotions, challenges, and overall journeys.

For more information on joining our support group or our additional support programs call 585.423.9700 or visit us at cscrochester.org.



**Community is Stronger
than Cancer.**

The Chaplain's Corner

Brothers and Sisters of VVA Chapter 20:

I want to remind everyone how important communication is among our membership. It is common for a member or their loved ones to have health issues as we age, and Chapter 20 members have always been supportive during these times.

I have received very few notices of our members' hospital visits or (God forbid) their passing from this life to the next. Please be my eyes and ears and let me know if any of our members are struggling with health issues (or worse).

*It is important for all of us to stay in touch, call for a "Buddy Check", to pop over for a visit, or go out to eat. Our mental health is as important as our physical health! If you hear anything please call me at **585-227-3426**, or email me at tpuff@frontiernet.net. Thank you! God Bless and Stay Well!!!!!!*

In Memoriam

We extend our sincere sympathy to the families of those members who have passed from our ranks in the past six months.

Robert Orvis	10/01/23
Edwin F. Williams	10/23/23
Earl F. Bonenblust	11/24/23
Frank E. Lazzaro, Sr.	12/19/23
Thomas W. Curry	01/11/24
Robert J. White	01/29/24
Daniel T. Paprocki	02/23/24
George A. Dadson	03/18/24
James B. Coates	03/22/24

24/7, confidential crisis support for **Veterans and their loved ones**



If you're a Veteran in crisis or concerned about one, reach caring, trained responders 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

When you call the Veterans Crisis Line, here is what you can expect:

- A qualified responder will answer your call, ready to listen and help.
- The responder will ask a few questions, such as whether you or the Veteran you're concerned about may be in immediate danger or at risk for suicide.
- The conversation is free and confidential, and you decide how much information to share.
- Support doesn't end with your conversation. Our responders can connect you with the resources you need.

You don't have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to connect.

You're not alone— the **Veterans Crisis Line** is here for you.



Dial 988 then Press 1



Chat online at
VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat



Text 838255



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Scan the QR code to download
Veterans Crisis Line resources.



You have questions. VA has answers.

Call VA today.

1-800-MyVA411

(1-800-698-2411)

The number to call when you don't know who to call.

You only need to remember **one number** for information on **VA care, benefits, and services** or to speak to a **live agent** for assistance!

LIVE ASSISTANCE
General information, directory assistance and technical support for VA.gov

VA HEALTH CARE
Eligibility, enrollment, locations and COVID-19

COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE
MISSION Act eligibility, copayments

NATIONAL CEMETERIES
Burial benefits, interment scheduling and headstone/Veteran marker

VETERANS CRISIS LINE
Immediate connection to caring, qualified responders

DEBT MANAGEMENT
Debt details, payment options and debtor rights

FACILITY LOCATOR
Locations of medical centers, benefits offices or cemeteries

BENEFITS ASSISTANCE
Information about a variety of VA benefits

HOMELESS VETERANS LINE
Information and support for homeless and at-risk callers

COVID-19 INFORMATION
Frequently asked questions and live assistance for COVID-related questions

1-800-MyVA411 serves all members of the Veteran and service member community seeking information or assistance

[Explore VA.gov to learn about your benefits](#)

VA is here for you.

1-800-MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411) is always the right number for information and assistance.

Or call directly:

Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255 and press 1, Chat, or Text 838255

Homeless Veteran Resources: 1-877-424-3838 or Chat

White House VA Hotline: 1-855-948-2311



Member Application

For new members, print this membership form and complete, then mail with your payment and a copy of the DD214 form. Renewal members may complete and print the form and mail it with your payment. Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter #20, P.O. Box 12580, Rochester, NY 14692

Membership Application

(bold fields are required.)

First Name

Last Name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Home Phone, Ext.

Work Phone, Ext.

Primary Email

Date of Birth

 MM/DD/YYYY

As of October 20, 2018, there will be one paid class of membership.

1. LIFE MEMBERSHIP: \$50.00
2. All 3-year members who have paid \$50 will automatically become a life member.
3. All one-year members will continue as an individual 1-year member until their membership expires, one-year members will then be required to pay \$50.00 to remain a member of VVA.

The Historical Archives of Chapter 20 Newsletters

By Joe Peck

After several years of searching and digitizing all of the newsletters published by Chapter 20, the historical archives of the Forward Observer and the Between the Lines is now available for viewing on the Chapter 20 website. This is our history from 1981 to our present day.

In addition to this, hard copies of all these publications with the permission of the donors will be donated to the Vietnam Veterans history section of the Rundle Library in downtown Rochester for future generations to view and get an insight of the history of Chapter 20.

Board Meetings	Membership Meetings
MAY 7, 2024	MAY 9, 2024
JUN 4, 2024	JUN 13, 2024
JUL 2, 2024	JUL 11, 2024
AUG 6, 2024	AUG 8, 2024
SEP 3, 2024	SEP 12, 2024
OCT 1, 2024	OCT 10, 2024
NOV 5, 2024	NOV 14, 2024
DEC 3, 2024	DEC 12, 2024

DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO THE CHILI COMMUNITY CENTER

3237 Chili Avenue, Rochester, NY 14624

The Building is basically located behind the Target store, but you have to proceed to the next left hand turn past the Fire House. Turn onto Old Scottsville-Chili Road, and then another left turn at the digital sign. Proceed straight back to the Community Center.

From the EAST: Heading West on 490, take Exit 5-RT 386 Chili Center (this is the second exit past the Buffalo Rd. exit). Turn left on *Chili-Coldwater Rd. and proceed to Chili Ave. Turn right on Chili Ave. Take the first left after the fire house. This is Old Scottsville Chili Rd. (RT 386). There is a Kwik Fill station on the corner. Take the next left at the digital sign and proceed to the Center, straight back. It is approximately 2 miles from the 490 exit to the Community Center.*


From the West: Heading East on 490, take Exit 5-RT 386 Chili Center. Turn right on *Chili-Coldwater Rd. and proceed to Chili Ave. Turn right on Chili Ave. Take the first left after the fire house. This is Old Scottsville Chili Rd. (RT 386). There is a Kwik Fill station on the corner. Take the next left at the digital sign and proceed to the Center, straight back. It is approximately 2 miles from the 490 exit to the Community Center.*

From the South: Take Ballantyne, Archer and Paul Roads to Chili Ave. and turn left.

From the North: Heading South on Howard Road to Chili Ave. Turn right on Chili Ave. and proceed to Chili Center.

INCOME TAX
 Maximizing Your Return
Tom Davis
 Income Tax Preparation/Consultation

1732 Winton Rd. N.
 Irondequoit NY. 14609
 585 - 288 - 8465
 intern22@frontiernet.net

 **ReHouse**
 ARCHITECTURAL SALVAGE

Sally Kamprath

469 West Ridge Road
 Rochester, NY 14615
 585-288-3080

skamprath@ReHouseNY.com
 www.ReHouse.com

Could someone you know be in crisis?

The VA's National Suicide Crisis Line

1-800-273-TALK or 1-800-273-8255
24/7 365 days/per year

Provides professional counseling to veterans, their family members or friends.

Do you know a veteran who is homeless?

The VA's National Homeless Veterans Hotline

The Hotline is staffed at the Canandaigua VA Medical Center in conjunction with the National Suicide Prevention services. Studies show a huge correlation with needs required by one or the other services provided at the time of the call.

1-877-424-3838
24/7 365 days/per year

Your business card could be here. Contact Chapter Treasurer, William Schrader, wjs77mbox@gmail.com for details.

In Memory Donations

When the simple act of placing flowers on a casket or placing stones on a headstone does not seem to be enough to honor the memory of a special someone who has passed away, one may choose to make a donation in his or her honor to commemorate the values and beliefs of the deceased. Chapter 20 VVA is committed to recognizing the sacrifices made by all military personnel in every branch of the armed forces. The memory of the deceased veteran is honored in the continuous work and service carried out by the dedicated Chapter members and associates. The monetary donations sent by individuals help make it possible to continue serving veterans and their families. The combined efforts of donors, lawmakers, members, and associates have far-reaching effects on the quality of all our lives.

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 20 offers several ways of commemorating a special person. One of those ways is the Memorial Walk at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Highland Park. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Walk is a pathway of bricks inscribed with the names of individuals who have served their country with valor. Their names will forever remain a reminder of the dedication and tenacity demonstrated by the thousands of men and women who have served in the U. S. Armed Forces.

If you wish to make a monetary donation directly to Chapter 20 in support of all the functions and services they provide to veterans and their families, send your check or money order payable to Chapter 20, VVA:

**Vietnam Veterans of America
Chapter 20
P.O. Box 12580
Rochester, NY 14612**

Rochester VA Outpatient Clinic



Calkins VA
Outpatient

Rochester Calkins VA Clinic
260 Calkins Road
Rochester, NY 14623
585 463- 2600

**Hours of Operation for
Rochester VA Clinic:**
Monday - Friday
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Extended hours by
appointment

Parking is free and the Clinics are handicapped accessible.

Rochester Calkins VA Clinic offers:

Primary Care
Pharmacy
Podiatry
Respiratory/Sleep
Psychiatry
Eye Care
Radiology
Cardiology

Dental
Laboratory
Prosthetic
Home Based Primary Care
Audiology/Speech Pathology
Dermatology
Women's Health
Gastroenterology

VA Health Care Benefits Contacts and References

E-Benefits Portal Site

<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal>

Enrollment/Eligibility

<http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility>

Health Resource Center 1-877-222-8387 (VETS)

OEF / OIF

<http://www.oefoif.va.gov>

Women Veterans <http://www.va.gov/womenvet>
Benefits Line 1-855-829-6636

Dental Care

http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/resources/publications/IB10-442_dental_benefits_for_veterans_2_14.pdf

Copays

<http://www1.va.gov/CBO/brochures.asp>

Health Resource Center 1-877-222-8387

Suicide Prevention Hotline

1-800-273-8255 (TALK)

Prosthetics

<http://www.prosthetics.va.gov>

My HealthVet

<http://www.myhealth.va.gov>

Homeless Veterans Hotline

1-877-424-3838

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Women's Affairs – Rosemary Rossi-Williams pefrose@gmail.com 738-6138 c

VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS AND INFORMATION

Greater Rochester Vietnam Veterans Memorial	753-7275
(enter 9; enter 2 to leave a message)	
VA Outpatient Clinic	260 Calkins Road 463-2600
Veterans Outreach Center	459 South Avenue 546-1081
VA Vet Center	232-5040
Veterans Administration	800-827-1000
Monroe County Veterans Service Agency	753-6040
e-mail: serviceofficer@yahoo.com	
VA Veterans Benefits Hotline	800-827-1000
Women Veterans Call Center	888-829-6636
VA Medical Center in Batavia	297-1000
VA Hospital in Buffalo	716-834-9200
VA Medical Center in Canandaigua	394-2000
VA Medical Center in Bath	607-664-4000
Vietnam Veterans of America National Office	800-882-1316
Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund	202-393-0090
National League of Families	
POW/MIA Updates	202-223-6846
Richards House at VOC	506-9060
The Resource Center at VOC	546-4250
Stars & Stripes – The Flag Store	546-3524
National Caregivers Support Line	855-260-3274
Homeless Hotline	877-424-3838
Crisis Hotline	800-273-8255

WEB SITES / EMAIL ADDRESSES

Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Highland Park
www.rochestervietnammemorial.org/The_Memorial
VVA New York State Council
www.nyvietnamvets.org
Honor Flight
www.HonorFlightRochester.org